Come to Washington April 27

The Southern PATRIOT

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South's Leaders to Report on Voting Restrictions

—Photo by John Albert

NEW YORK RECEPTION SPEAKERS were, from left, Judge Hubert T. Delany, Aubrey W. Williams, E. D. Nixon, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, and Charles G. Gomillion.

Mrs. Roosevelt Assists SCEF

NEW YORK CITY—Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt invited a group of friends to a reception for Aubrey Williams at the Hotel Delmonico here on Feb. 26.

The guests contributed almost $13,000 to help the Southern Conference Educational Fund expand its work in the South during this crucial period.

The assemblage was stirred by talks by Mrs. Roosevelt; Mr. Williams; Mr. E. D. Nixon, trade-union official and a leader in the Montgomery, Ala., bus protest; Mr. Charles G. Gomillion of Tuskegee Institute, president of the Tuskegee Civic Association, and Judge Hubert T. Delany of New York, outstanding leader in the struggle for civil rights.

Mrs. Roosevelt pointed out that colored people are bearing the brunt of the struggle in the South but that many white progressives are lined up with them.

"Sometimes we forget what these progressives are going through," the former First Lady said as a prelude to introducing Mr. Williams, Montgomery publisher and president of SCEF. He was director of the National Youth Administration under Mrs. Roosevelt's late husband, President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

"We must support these organizations and these people who are doing the work that we in the North are not able to do," Mrs. Roosevelt declared.

Mr. Williams said: "We in the South are going through one of the worst periods I can recall. It has brought into being forces that we thought were on the decline. The situation is now reaching a new and more terrible stage."

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N. Y. Committee

As a result of the Feb. 26 reception, New York friends of SCEF are forming a permanent committee to insure year-around support for the organization in the New York area. Mrs. Roosevelt said she will cooperate with the committee, and urged support of it in her syndicated column. Formation of the committee is being coordinated by Mrs. Ruth Rosenwald, 350 Central Park West, New York 25; telephone ACademy 2-0258. Those wishing to help should call or write her.

Aubrey Williams Will Also Address Meeting

By Staff Correspondent

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Some of the South's outstanding leaders will come to Washington on April 27 to report on the voting situation in their states.

They will tell about restrictions on citizens seeking to register and vote. It is hoped that this will influence Government agencies to move to end these violations of civil rights.

The occasion will be the Conference on Voting Restrictions in Southern States, to be held from 2:30 to 5 p.m. at Asbury Methodist Church, 11th and K Streets, N. W. The Conference is being coordinated by the Southern Conference Educational Fund.

Dr. Francis A. Gregory, chairman of the Committee on Local Arrangements, announced that Aubrey Williams, Montgomery, Ala., publisher, will deliver the keynote address. The voting reports will be summarized by Dr. James A. Nabrit, secretary of Howard University, Washington.

Bishop and Rabbi on Program

Chairman of the Conference is Bishop Edgar A. Love, Baltimore area, Methodist Church. Rabbi A. Balfour Brickner, Washington, will deliver the invocation.

The first-hand reports on voting will be made in person by Charles G. Gomillion of Tuskegee Institute, Ala., president of the Tuskegee Civic Association; the Rev. Ben F. Wyland, executive secretary, Florida Council for Racial Cooperation, Tampa, Fla.; Austin T. Walden, attorney and civil rights leader in Atlanta, Ga.; Kenneth Walker, editor, Colfax Chronicle, Colfax, Louisiana.

Also Aaron Henry, civil rights leader in Clarksdale, Miss.; Miss Willson Whitman, author and editor, Southern Pines, N. C.; Mrs. Andrew W. Simkins, civil rights and civil liberties leader in Columbia, S. C.; and W. Hale Thompson, attorney and civic leader, Newport News, Va.

Written reports will be submitted from other Southern states, including one by Cliff Mackay, editor of the Afro-American in Baltimore, Md. All the reports, written and oral, will be printed in a booklet to be distributed nationally.

Southern News Round-up

Ky. SCEF Backs Civil Rights Bills

SCEF officials in Kentucky helped organize a campaign in support of three civil rights bills introduced in the 1958 State General Assembly.

Two of the bills would prohibit discrimination because of race in restaurants, hotels, theaters, stores and other public places throughout the state. The third bill would give Louisville power to enact an ordinance prohibiting such discrimination in that city.

The bills were introduced by Rep. Felix Anderson, Louisville, only Negro in the Kentucky General Assembly.

SCEF leaders mobilized support by personal contact and mail. A letter urging support for the legislation was sent to hundreds of Kentucky citizens. It was signed by the following SCEF officials: Dr. John S. Chambers, executive secretary of the Kentucky Council of Churches; Dr. Katharine Dodd, Distinguished Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Louisville Medical School; the Rev. Dr. M.M.D. Perdue, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Louisville; the Rt. Rev. C. Ewbank Tucker, Bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church; and Alfred M. Wolfson, professor at Murray State College.

The bills got lost in the turmoil that marked the closing of the General Assembly in mid-March.

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Despite two tries, a so-called "Little Rock" bill failed to pass the Delaware General Assembly. It would have provided for closing the schools if National Guard or Federal troops were called into action. On a first ballot, it received only six of the required 18 votes for House passage. Called up a second time five days later, it got only 10 votes.

* * * *

In Mobile, Ala., 32 white ministers joined 37 Negro ministers in a joint appeal to the City Commission asking for repeal of ordinances requiring segregated seating on public buses.

* * * *

Recent U. S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decisions have upheld desegregation for New Orleans public schools, Louisiana colleges, New Orleans parks, and a golf course in West Palm Beach, Fla. The court also reversed a lower court decision in the purging of more than 2,500 colored voters from the rolls of Quachita Parish, La.

* * * *

A fourth Klansman has been sentenced to 20 years in prison for mutilation of a Negro in Birmingham last September.

Florida Witch Hunt: It's An Old, Old Tune

It was a familiar record that they played—but one that still manages to get big headlines in the South—when a Florida legislative committee held hearings recently in Tallahassee and Miami.

The committee was out to expose "communism" in the movement against segregation. It subpoenaed officials of the Florida Council on Human Relations in Tallahassee, NAACP leaders in Miami, and other persons active for integration.

Hearings ended abruptly in Miami after most of the witnesses balked at questions and denounced the committee. One witness, the Rev. Theodore R. Gibson, head of the Miami NAACP, drew a burst of applause from spectators when he refused to produce his organization's records and walked out of the courtroom. The committee said it would cite him and 14 others for contempt.

The South Florida Council of the American Jewish Congress issued a statement saying that the "real purpose" of the committee was to "smear any organization, no matter how patriotic, that in anyway seeks to bring about orderly compliance with the U. S. Supreme Court decisions."

Aubrey W. Williams, president of SCEF, sent a letter to all daily newspapers in Florida urging people not to be deceived by the committee.

One sane note came from the committee itself in the voice of Rep. W. C. Herrell who defended rights of witnesses in Tallahassee and urged that the committee also investigate pro-segregation groups.

Gomillion Speaks To Ala. Legislators

Charles G. Gomillion, president of the Tuskegee, Ala., Civic Association, recently appeared before an Alabama legislative committee and made a dramatic appeal for fair play in Macon County.

Speaking before the committee set up to decide whether to abolish the county, which includes Tuskegee, Gomillion said:

"There is no good reason why white and Negro citizens in Macon County cannot develop a community which would be a model of democratic living. The citizens can learn to recognize and respect the rights of one another . . . You will want history to record that you helped to build Macon County. You might not want school children in the future to read that you voted to destroy a county . . ."

Gomillion, an SCEF board member, was bombarded by 30 minutes of questions from the committee after he presented his prepared statement. The Montgomery daily paper, the *Advertiser*, reported that some of the questions were "loaded" but that Gomillion "conducted himself well."

Books And Pamphlets You'll Want To Read

TENDER WARRIORS, by DOROTHY STERLING with DONALD GROSS; photographs by MYRON EHRENBERG. Hill and Wang, Inc., 104 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, 1958. 96 pp., $2.50 cloth, $1.50 paper.

An excellent review of school segregation and integration in the United States, with emphasis on the last four years. The story of recent years is told by the white and Negro pupils themselves and some of their parents in interviews with the authors.

The first-person accounts by the "tender warriors" in the various struggles, plus the excellent photographic record, make this required reading for those who want to understand what is going on in the South today.

PSYCHIATRIC ASPECTS OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION, by Committee on Social Issues, Group for Advancement of Psychiatry, 1790 Broadway New York 19, N. Y. 94 pp., $1.

The authors say this report was written "for the purpose of discussing some of the psychological aspects of desegregation with special attention to the problems of adjustment of both races, in the hope that better understanding will facilitate use of our intellectual and social skills in their solution." They have done a very good job.

MARTIN LUTHER KING AND THE MONTGOMERY STORY, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Box 271, Nyack, N. Y. 16 pp., 10c.

The story of the Montgomery bus protest is told in popular form designed to reach the maximum number of people with the message of non-violent action to end segregation. It stresses that one must see the enemy "as a human being, like yourself. You have to try to understand him and sympathize with him."

". . . . and with the knowledge came the key to all the paradoxes in my world: that racial bars build a wall not only around the Negro people but around the white people as well, cramping their spirits and causing them to grow in distorted shapes."

That is the theme, in part, of one of the most revealing books yet to be written on race relations in the United States:

The Wall Between*

by ANNE BRADEN

This is the dramatic story of the Louisville Case, the story of how Anne and Carl Braden bought a house for Andrew Wade and his family because the Wades, being Negroes, could not buy outright the house of their choice in Louisville, Kentucky.

But the case itself is only the framework of the book — the structure of a thoughtful analysis of the relationship between Negroes and whites. Mrs. Braden, SCEF Field Secretary, sensitively and perceptively probes into the worlds of the people involved — the people who live in the shadows on either side of the wall. Here are excerpts from THE WALL BETWEEN:

The World of Andrew Wade

Andrew was only five or six years old. He and his parents and his sister were riding in their car. They passed Louisville's one big amusement park, Fontaine Ferry. An amusement park is a tempting fascination to a child—the Ferris wheel turning, the music from the merry-go-round, the laughter of those within. Andrew and his sister asked to stop and go in.

Andrew recalls that his father seemed to be chagrined, almost guilty as he spoke. "Son, I can't take you there," he said. "That park is for white people. We are colored people. There are some places colored people are not allowed to go."

Andrew was stunned. A door had slammed in his face, the first of many slamming doors that he and every Negro child encounters.

The World of Anne Braden

Something happened to me each time I looked at the Negro girl who always inherited my clothes. Sometimes she would come to our house with her mother, wearing one of the dresses I had discarded. The dresses never fit her because she was fatter than I was. She would sit in a straight chair in our kitchen waiting for her mother, because of course she would not sit in one of our comfortable chairs in the living room. She would sit there looking uncomfortable, my old faded dress binding her at the waist and throat. And someway I knew that this was not what Jesus meant when he said to clothe the naked. And as I watched her, I would feel a binding sensation around my own throat. And I would feel to see if my own dress was too tight. But of course it was not. My clothes were always well cut and perfectly fitted. Instead there was a strait jacket around my soul.

The World of Scott Hamilton

I do not know Scott Hamilton. His life touched mine and threatened to wreck it; and I suspect that my life and those of other people on my side in this case affected his life too, because he lived and breathed the case for three years. But we could not know each other; we met as opponents. I saw him as the man who put me in jail, who sent my husband to prison, who broke up my home, who stood in the courtroom and before the bar of public opinion and denounced me and my husband as menaces to the community and to civilization itself. He undoubtedly saw me as a person who had caused him no end of trouble, and as a threat to all he considered right in the world. Life works in such a way that it builds another one of those walls between us and the people who come on to our horizon as our adversaries. We cannot know them; we cannot meet as human beings.

And yet, as the case progressed, I gradually came to the conclusion that I must understand the people who opposed us.

The World of Louisville

I think I never felt segregation quite so acutely as I did one day when I ran into a Negro woman who was my friend on Louisville's main downtown street.

It was quite hot that day, and I was very thirsty. I almost suggested to her, before I thought, that we stop in at a drugstore and get something cool to drink. I caught myself in time and saved her the embarrassment of having to remind me that no drugstore in that section would serve her. But I think I got some inkling that day as I walked along Louisville's main street—hot and thirsty and with no place I could quench my thirst—of what it meant every minute of the day, every hour of your life to be a Negro in a segregated society.

* * * *

This is a disturbing—and challenging—book. The attempts by the Wades and the Bradens to break through a part of the wall was disturbing to the conscience of white Louisville. We believe that THE WALL BETWEEN *will disturb many who are still sitting out this revolution in human relations and will move them to help break through the wall.*

It will make them keenly aware that

". . . no one can go untouched by segregation in the South. No white person in the South can be neutral on this question. Either you find a way to oppose the evil, or the evil becomes a part of you and you are a part of it, and it winds itself about your soul like the arms of an octopus."

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